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Letter dated 6 April 2000 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to inform you, and through you the members of the Security Council, of the gist of my meeting in Geneva on 4 April 2000 with David Levy, Foreign Minister of Israel, at his request.

The Foreign Minister reaffirmed his Government's decision to withdraw Israeli troops from southern Lebanon in accordance with Security Council resolution 425 (1978), fully and without conditions. He informed me that the withdrawal would be implemented in a continuous operation, "in one go", by the end of July 2000. The Foreign Minister assured me of his Government's decision to cooperate fully with the United Nations throughout the process, within the framework of the relevant Security Council resolutions. We agreed that cooperation by all parties concerned would be needed in order to avoid any deterioration of the situation during the withdrawal.

The next day, 5 April, I spoke on the telephone to Ehud Barak, Prime Minister of Israel. We discussed the decisions taken by his Government, as conveyed to me by his Foreign Minister. I told the Prime Minister that the United Nations had an obligation to fulfil the mandates established by the Security Council in its resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978), while noting that many questions would have to be addressed to make this possible. In the meantime, the Secretariat has begun preliminary contingency planning.

I instructed my Special Envoy, Terje Roed-Larsen, to meet immediately with the President of Lebanon to brief him on this development. Mr. Roed-Larsen met with President Lahoud in Beirut on 5 April 2000 and with the Prime Minister and other senior officials of the Government of Lebanon on 6 April. I spoke with President Lahoud myself on the telephone today. The President raised a number of questions relating to the Israeli proposal, which he has since made public. These questions are receiving my close attention. My Special Envoy will meet with the Foreign Minister of Syria later this week, as well as with other concerned parties in the region, to brief them on the situation and to seek their views. For my own part, I am continuing my consultations with interested Member States in the region and beyond.

I have conveyed to the Prime Minister of Israel my expectation that the United Nations will receive, in due course, formal notification of Israel's intentions. Only at that stage would I be in a position to formally contact all those concerned, with the aim of enabling the United Nations to do its part to ensure full implementation of

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resolutions 425 (1978) and 426 (1978). To that end, and at the appropriate time, I hope I can count on the support of members of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Kofi A. **Annan**